

The House of John Brick
County Road No. 50, between Mounces Creek and Brown Run
Dutch Neck, Hopewell Township NEAR GREENWICH
Cumberland County, New Jersey

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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
District of New Jersey

Historic American Buildings Survey
Seymour Williams, F.A.I.A., District Officer
133 Central Avenue, Rahway, New Jersey

The House of John Brick
County Road No. 50, between Mounces Creek and Brown Run
Dutch Neck, Hopewell Township
Cumberland County, New Jersey

Owner: Warren Riggins

Dates of Erection: Circa 1760, 1790-1823, and later

Architect:

Builder: John Brick 3rd (1733-1780) and
John Reeve (ca. 1740-1815)

Present Condition: Original with subsequent additions.
All exterior stuccoed modern

Number of Stories: Two and garret with part cellar
and leanto sheds

Materials of Construction: Foundation - brick above
grade

Exterior walls - brick
now stuccoed

Interior walls - common
walls of earlier and later
units are brick plastered,
partitions are lath and
plaster on studding

Chimneys - brick, built
into inside of gable end
walls

Roof - gable, wood shingled;
leanto, tin covered

Historical Data:

John Brick Jr. died in Hopewell Township,
Cumberland County on 23rd of 1st month 1758, (1)

(1) Encyclopedia of American Quaker Genealogy, vol. 2 (1938)

having married 27th of 1st month (March) 1729 Ann Nicholson at Salem Meeting House of the Society of Friends, by whom he had eight children including a daughter Elizabeth born 4th of 3rd mo. 1732 and an eldest son John Brick born 10th of 11th mo. 1733, of whom further. He was a representative from the County in the Assembly of the Province from 1740-1751, and a Judge of the Court of Common Pleas of Cumberland County in 1748.(2)

John Brick 3rd abovementioned built the house here considered and removed from this homestead in Dutch Neck on the north side of Cohansey Creek in Hopewell Township in 1764 with a certificate for himself, wife, and son, addressed to Evesham Monthly Meeting in Burlington County, and settled afterward in Gloucester Township, Gloucester County, (within the limits of that meeting) where he died between 29 February and 21 April, 1780 the dates of signing and probate of his will. (3) The marriage of this John Brick of Cumberland County to Abigail French had been reported to Haddonfield Monthly Meeting on 10th of 11th mo. 1760. (4) His wife was born 18 January 1742 daughter of Charles and Ann (Clement) French whose estate in Evesham Township, Burlington County, extended into Waterford Township, Gloucester County adjacent. This marriage probably accounts for the removal of John Brick from Cumberland County as stated and for the sale of his real estate there as follows:

By an unrecorded deed of 20 August 1766, this John Brick 3rd and wife Abigail conveyed to his sister Elizabeth's husband, John Reeve, the plantation of 226 acres on part of which the house here surveyed is found situated, this tract possibly having been inherited from his father John Brick 2nd.

(2) Register of the N.J. Society of Colonial Dames of America 1928

(3) New Jersey Archives, vol. 34, p. 63

(4) H.B. French: The Descendants of Thomas French, Phila., 1909, vol. 1, p. 381

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This John Reeve of Cumberland County had married Elizabeth Brick of the same place on 6th of 12th mo. 1753 at Hopewell Meeting House, and by his will of 23 December 1815 he devised "To my grandson, the eldest John Reeve, all my plantation where I lived in Cumberland County, which I purchased of John Brick", as abovesaid.

By a deed of 23 January 1823, this John Reeve 3rd, and wife Sarah conveyed to Elmer Ogden the 226 acre plantation in Hopewell Township, reciting his title as above outlined. From Ogden some 176 acres thereof were sold to Smith Sheppard and Daniel Sheppard on 24 March 1869, and by deed of 11 April 1878 the latter of the two became sole owner. By his will of 6 April 1889, he as Daniel M. Sheppard devised to his wife Fanny A. Sheppard "the Ogden Farm, together with all my outlands that I now own, situated in the Township of Hopewell", and his widow's executors by deed of 15 January 1918 conveyed the said 176 acre farm to Samuel M. Watson. The last named by his will of 17 December 1929 devised to his wife Sallie E. Watson "all that farm in Hopewell Township, formerly known as the Ogden, or Sheppard, Farm on the road leading from the Dutch Neck and Sheppard's Mill Road, and runs back to Cohansey Creek."

Finally, by deed of 14 February 1936, the executors of the estate of the widow Watson abovenamed conveyed the same farm of 176 acres to Warren Riggins who is the present owner, 1939.

While the farmhouse here surveyed has comparatively little claim to architectural merit in any one of the three periods of its erection, its history as revealed in the fabric itself is of peculiar interest. The oldest unit is the central, two story, house composed of the common living room-kitchen only one step above grade and with no cellar below, a two-room second story less than nine feet above, and an unfinished low garret under the gable roof. At one end of living room is a great chimney, its fireplace now closed but on the face of which is very simple mantel shelf provides the sole finishing work. But from the chimney to the return wall of the room vertical wood boards and panelled doors one above the other form a cabinet closet.

As indicated by the large scale of the windows and of their moldings in room A (sheet 10), the loftier two story and finished garret unit which extends from the south end of the earlier house was an addition made at a time between 1790 and 1823 when John Reeve sold the place. The floor-line being three steps above that of the original house, a daylighted cellar was excavated for the newer one. The leanto shed against the east wall of both units was probably erected at this later time also. The most interesting feature in the second unit is the corner stair case from the second floor to the garret, as it is built in winder fashion around a central post built up of narrow vertical pieces tongued together. Prototypes of this kind of stairway are found in mediaeval stonework. The so-called "bridge chimneys" of the south gable end wall have apparently no function, no trace of fireplaces having been found. They are unique on a house of but one room depth, are definitely in the early 19th century fashion for more imposing houses, and serving to fix the date of this unit of the house.

More modern is the frame walled leanto shed added at the north end of the original house and continued later as an open porch along the west front.

Bibliography:

A search of title in Cumberland County
Land and Probate records by Oscar F.
Benjamin, H.A.B.S. title abstractor

Field book and drawings and photographs
of the Survey

Lewis D. Cook

Supervising Historian

Approved:

Seymour Williams

SEYMOUR WILLIAMS, F.A.I.A.
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